

Where To Go By Car

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Interstate State Park

Habitat contains moist woods and bedrock glades. **Best bets:** The entrance area, Silver Brook and Skyline Trails. Check out Centennial Glades State Natural Area, Interstate Lowland Forest and Dalles of the St. Croix Natural Area.

Ridgeview Trail

The trail is located just north of Osceola. Habitat contains forested bluffs and bedrock glades. **Best bets:** Chisago Loop and the Fish Hatchery Trail to the river. The bedrock glades are a proposed state natural area.

Standing Cedars/Farmington Bottoms

This site is located just south of Osceola. Habitat contains forested bluffs and high quality riparian forest. **Best bets:** Good access at 55th Avenue and on 280th St. just north of 10th Avenue.

Somerset Landing

Riparian forest is found here. **Best bet:** Winter wren, hooded warblers and barred owls have been found along the road 1/4 mile north of this landing.

St. Croix Islands Wildlife Area

Habitat contains upland grasslands , riparian bottomlands and open wetlands. **Best bet:** Access is off Rice Lake Road, 4 miles NW of Somerset. Hike here to the river access.

Willow River State Park

Look for prairie, and dry, moist and riparian forests. Look for blue- winged and cerulean warblers. **Best bets:** Trout Brook, Little Falls and Hidden Ponds Trails.

Kinnickinnic State Park

Habitat contains upland prairies and steep river valley/moist forest. **Best Bets:** Hike the prairie trails and follow the Kinnickinnic River through its narrow valley. Particularly productive for unusual species such as Henslow's sparrow, orchard oriole, winter wren, Nashville and Kentucky warblers and other species typically found farther north or south.

Minnesota

Minnesota Interstate State Park

Habitat contains moist forest and bedrock glades. **Best bets:** Pothole and Railroad Trails.

William O'Brien State Park

Habitat contains prairies, wetlands, forest, high quality riparian forest. **Best bets:** Lower Campground/Lake Alice Loop Trail and Upper Campground/Pioneer Group Camp Loop Trail.

Arcola Bluff Trail

Habitat contains forested bluffs and ravines. **Best bets:** Walk the main trail from Rivard Road to the foot of the railroad bridge, great views from the trail at the south end of the grassland. No facilities are available at this site. **Do not block the gate.**

Boomsite Wayside

Habitat contains cliffs and riparian bottomlands. **Best bet:** Take the stairway down to the river where bank swallows and prothonotary warblers may be found.

Afton State Park

Habitat contains prairies, moist, dry and riparian forests. **Best bet:** Take the River Trail north and circle around the backpacking campground.



Where To Go By Canoe/Kayak

Excellent birding exists along the cliffs, narrow channels and backwaters of the river. Look for Louisiana waterthrush, prothonotary warblers, and red- shouldered hawks. Good finds may include cerulean warblers and winter wrens.

St. Croix Falls to Osceola

Be sure to check out Close Slough south of St. Croix Falls. Look for trumpeter swans in Peasley Lake. Wisconsin's first nesting in the wild following reintroduction took place here. Swans have also nested just downstream on the Minnesota side in the backwater above the State Highway 243 bridge. Close Slough is shallow at times and dragging your canoe over sandbars can be expected.

Osceola to William O'Brien State Park

Bald eagles nest in this stretch and the river's largest great blue heron rookery is found here. The back channels offer close looks at warblers and other birds. Louisiana waterthrushes can be found in the narrow ravines leading into the first channel below Osceola Landing. In recent years, ospreys have nested on the Swing Bridge. The back channel just below and across from Log House Landing offers riparian habitats and lots of smaller birds plus red- shouldered hawks.

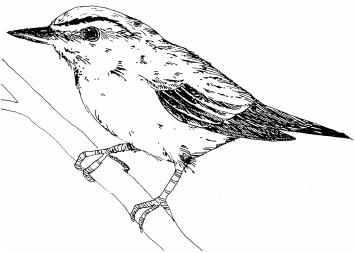
William O'Brien State Park to Stillwater

More bald eagles nest on this stretch of the river than any other. Double- crested cormorants can be found in the Apple River delta. Great blue herons have several rookeries here though only the one at Stillwater has been consistent over the past decade. This is the best area for cerulean warblers. Prothonotary warblers are common in the islands below the Apple River. Search cliffs for mixed colonies of bank and cliff swallows.

Where To Go By Boat

Stillwater to Prescott

The best birding may be between Stillwater and north to the Soo Line railroad bridge. A great blue heron rookery is located on an island at the northern edge of Stillwater. Bald eagles are known to nest across from Stillwater, near Bayport, just south of Hudson and Afton State Park. Please keep your distance to avoid disturbing herons and eagles during nesting season. Stop at Kinnickinnic State Park, Afton State Park and St. Croix Bluffs Regional County Park for more birding opportunities.



Seasonality

Fall

Watch for kettles of migrating hawks along the bluffs on warm sunny days with north winds.

Winter

Trumpeter swans congregate in large numbers on the river at Hudson. Bald eagles are present near open water year- round and are most easily found in the Dalles area at Interstate State Park or near Prescott and the Mississippi River.

Spring

The most spectacular birding is during ice break- up when eagles are migrating in large numbers. This can also be a good time to see flocks of waterfowl during migration. The north- south alignment of the river is a natural migration corridor for most other migrants, especially the woodland species.

Annotated Checklist

100 Summer Species

Complete checklists are available from most state parks and National Park Service visitor centers. This checklist includes the 100 most likely to be observed species as determined by the breeding bird survey conducted by the National Park Service between St. Croix Falls and Stillwater in early summer. Selected specialty birds are also listed.

Abundance Key

- C Common U Uncommon
O Occasional R Rare
* Specialty species (see text on reverse side)


Species Abundance

___ Double- crested Cormorant	R*
___ Great Blue Heron	C
___ Great Egret	U
___ Green Heron	C
WATERFOWL	
___ Trumpeter Swan	R*
___ Canada Goose	C
___ Wood Duck	C
___ Mallard	C
___ Hooded Merganser	U
RAPTORS	
___ Turkey Vulture	C
___ Osprey	U
___ Bald Eagle	C
___ Red- shouldered Hawk	C
___ Broad- winged Hawk	U
___ Red- tailed Hawk	C
___ American Kestrel	C
GALLINACEOUS BIRDS, SHOREBIRDS, GULLS	
___ Ring- necked Pheasant	U
___ Wild Turkey	C
___ Killdeer	C
___ Spotted Sandpiper	C
___ Ring- billed Gull	C
DOVES, CUCKOOS, OWLS, KINGFISHER, SWIFT	
___ Rock Dove	C

Species	Abundance
___ Mourning Dove	C
___ Yellow- billed Cuckoo	U
___ Black- billed Cuckoo	U
___ Great Horned Owl	C
___ Barred Owl	C
___ Belted Kingfisher	C
___ Chimney Swift	C
WOODPECKERS	
___ Red- headed Woodpecker	O
___ Ruby- throated Hummingbird	U
___ Red- bellied Woodpecker	C
___ Yellow- bellied Sapsucker	O
___ Downy Woodpecker	C
___ Hairy Woodpecker	C
___ Northern Flicker	C
___ Pileated Woodpecker	C
FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS	
___ Eastern Wood Pewee	C
___ Least Flycatcher	C
___ Eastern Phoebe	C
___ Great Crested Flycatcher	C
___ Eastern Kingbird	C
___ Purple Martin	U
___ Tree Swallow	C
___ Northern Rough- winged Swallow	C
___ Bank Swallow	C*
___ Cliff Swallow	C
___ Barn Swallow	C
JAYS, CROWS, TITMICE, NUTHATCHES	
___ Blue Jay	C
___ American Crow	C
___ Black- capped Chickadee	C
___ White- breasted Nuthatch	C
WREN, GNATCATCHER, THRUSHES, THRASHERS	
___ House Wren	C
___ Winter Wren	R*
___ Blue- gray Gnatcatcher	C
___ Eastern Bluebird	U
___ Veery	U
___ Wood Thrush	U
___ American Robin	C
___ Gray Catbird	C
___ Brown Thrasher	U


Species	Abundance
WAXWING, STARLING, VIREOS, WARBLERS	
___ Cedar Waxwing	C
___ European Starling	C
___ Yellow- throated Vireo	C
___ Warbling Vireo	C
___ Red- eyed Vireo	C
___ Blue- winged Warbler	R*
___ Nashville Warbler	R*
___ Yellow Warbler	C
___ Pine Warbler	U
___ Cerulean Warbler	O
___ Black- and- white Warbler	U
___ American Redstart	C
___ Hooded Warbler	*
___ Prothonotary Warbler	C
___ Ovenbird	C
___ Louisiana Waterthrush	U
___ Kentucky Warbler	R*
___ Common Yellowthroat	C
TANAGER, GROSBEAKS, SPARROWS, ETC.	
___ Scarlet Tanager	C
___ Northern Cardinal	C
___ Rose- breasted Grosbeak	C
___ Indigo Bunting	C
___ Eastern Towhee	O
___ Chipping Sparrow	C
___ Clay- colored Sparrow	C
___ Field Sparrow	C
___ Vesper Sparrow	C
___ Savannah Sparrow	C
___ Song Sparrow	C
___ Swamp Sparrow	C
BLACKBIRDS, FINCHES	
___ Red- winged Blackbird	C
___ Eastern Meadowlark	U
___ Common Grackle	C
___ Brown- headed Cowbird	C
___ Baltimore Oriole	C
___ American Goldfinch	C
___ Purple Finch	O
___ House Finch	C
___ House Sparrow	C

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway



A Birder’s Guide to the St. Croix River: Taylors Falls to Prescott

Birding guides typically focus on the rare, the unusual or unique, the spectacular, the hard- to- find or charismatic type birds. This guide is no different, but also focuses on the common species most likely to be observed.



The map illustrates the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, a stretch of the St. Croix River between Taylors Falls, Minnesota, and Prescott, Wisconsin. Key locations marked include Taylors Falls, St. Croix Falls, Osceola, Farmington Bottoms, Somerset Landing, St. Croix Islands, Arcola Bluff, Stillwater, Bayport, Afton, and Prescott. State parks shown are Minnesota State Park, Wisconsin Interstate State Park, William O'Brien State Park, Willow River State Park, and Kinnickinnic State Park. Rivers depicted are the Apple River, Willow River, and Kinnickinnic River. A legend indicates that triangles represent State Parks and dots represent Other Natural Areas. A scale bar shows 0 to 5 miles, and a north arrow is present.

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
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